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ABSTRACT

The benefits of and barriers to lifelong learning were examined in two studies of the relationship between social milieu and interest in, access to, and participation in adult education. The first study was conducted in Freiburg, Germany, in 1995-1998, and the second study was conducted in Munich, Germany, in 2000-2002. The Freiburg study focused on women from two milieus of the upper class and two of the lower class. All social groups interviewed largely accepted the conviction that lifelong learning is indispensable. Because of the demands of the labor market, most of those interviewed across the milieus viewed education first and foremost as a means and not an end in itself. Attitude regarding the indispensability of further education was strongly influenced by milieu, with the traditional blue-collar milieu and consumer milieu appearing to feel the greatest pressure to participate in further education. The traditional bourgeois milieu understood education mainly as a widening of one's horizon and also as acquiring knowledge about cultural traditions. The Munich study, which was a survey of approximately 4,000 randomly selected individuals that elicited a response of 1,050, also confirmed that adult education is a broadly accepted topic. (Descriptions of the traditional bourgeois, postmodern, adaptive, status-oriented, and modern bourgeois milieus are appended.) (MN)

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ESREA-Conference

"Wider Benefits of Learning"

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Learning and Education in the Context of Social Milieus – The Risks and Benefits of social and cultural capital

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1. Introduction

Though the importance of Lifelong Learning is a common and undoubted topic in the scientific and political debate, its estimation in different social groups still shows a big variety. Considering the social fabric we can still find great differences in both recognition and participation in formal and informal learning. This implicates that access to the very concrete but also to the wider benefits of learning is not at all the same for everybody in modern society. Beside the still existing and well-known differences in sex, age, income and job a new perspective on target groups has become important in the social sciences:

People who share a common set of core values and beliefs constitute social groups which are called 'social milieus'. As a matter of fact, each social milieu is composed of a number of persons who agree roughly with one another concerning the basic realities of every day life such as work, leisure, preferences, tastes, relationships, hopes, fears and dreams. Simply stated: a social milieu can be regarded as a group of like-minded people.

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Referring to this Rudolf Tippelt and Heiner Barz performed three bigger research projects dealing with "Social Milieus and Interests and Access to Adult Education" in Germany. Named after the medium-sized town in the southwest of Germany, the "Freiburg Study" is based on approximately 120 qualitative in-depth interviews in the city and region of Freiburg. The second project, which started at the end of 2000 aims to give an insight into participation as well as nonparticipation in Adult Education in Munich, one of Germany's biggest cities. Its research programme includes interviews with experts, biographical interviews, group discussions and a representative investigation. The last and most extensive study "Social and regional differentiation in continuing education in Germany" is financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) of Germany and started off in July 2001. Obviously we can not present any results of this recent project. But what we like to do is to give an outline of the specific framework of the milieu and lifestyle research programme. And we will also sketch selected findings of the already accomplished Freiburg Study as well as the first results of the representative investigation within the current Munich Study.

Presenting the results of these two projects we will not only demonstrate the differentiation of access to Adult Education. Especially the topic of the returns of Lifelong Learning in categories like social and cultural capital should be stressed.

2. Social differences are also cultural differences

Our research work is generally based on the framework of social milieus. This model is closely related to the concept of symbolic representations of social differentiation. Pierre Bourdieu (1982) introduced in the marxist tradition the category of the "symbolic capital" beneath the "economical capital". He therewith means the sum of cultural recognition that a single individual or also a social group can gain through smart use of the social symbol systems for itself. Without being subjectively aware the acting individuals are orienting their behaviour generally by the factual intention of the material or symbolic maximization of benefits. At the same time Bourdieu claims that in the collective schemes of recognition and evaluation the classrelated calculations of benefits have been fixed as forms of "Habitus". Tastes and preferences as well as habitudes of eating, styles of clothing or appreciation of art are in Bourdieus view therewith no longer the spontaneous result of aesthetic perception but rather the product of socialisation and educational processes in which the taste is learned in dependence to the class position. In the "Habitus", the different strategies of the social competition of social group are harden as different types of taste and habitudes of leading one's life.

Bourdieu states that the "economical capital" and the "cultural capital" are the two dimensions of most importance, in which the reached positions in the fight for influence and recognition can be read. Occasionally he adds as a third size the quantity and quality of social relations ("social capital"). Essentially the field of social differences is determined therefore by the possession of productive or unproductive fortune and through the availability of cultural capital. In the frame of Bourdieus empirical work cultural capital is measured as the quantity and quality of the acquired levels of qualification.

Vertical Bourdieu distinguishes three classes - Bourgeoisie, Petty Bourgeoisie and Working Class - which he assigns three lifestyles (and "types of tastes") on the basis of his empirical studies: "Distinction" for the ruling class, "Pretension" for the middle classes and the dictation of "Necessity" in the Working Class.

Furthermore Bourdieus concept contains that schools and other symbolic institutions contribute to the reproduction of inequality by devising a curriculum that rewards the "cultural capital" of mainstream groups while devaluing working class or non-mainstream forms of knowledge. Bourdieu (1973) sees the function of the education system as being to reproduce the culture of the dominant classes, thus helping to ensure their continued dominance. For P. Bourdieu (1973), success in the educational system is largely dictated by the extent to which individuals have absorbed the dominant culture, or how much cultural capital they have got. Families from different social classes pass on different cultural knowledge to their children. Children of the dominant class possess forms of cultural and linguistic competence that advantage them over working class students in schools where the curriculum requires dominant class knowledge for success.

As a consequence, children of the dominant class who display social and linguistic competence required by the school curriculum excel, graduate, and obtain better jobs after graduation. Working class children, on the other hand, learn from their school experiences not to expect success, experience levelled aspirations, and exhibit negative group attitudes regarding their futures. These attitudes are part of what Bourdieu refers to as habitus, the attitudes, beliefs, and experiences of those inhabiting one's social world. While habitus is a result of objective structures, for example, a curriculum that disadvantages working class students, the resulting negative group attitudes and levelled aspirations of working class students reinforce the very structures that produced them. Cultural capital explanations of inequality are a considerable improvement over correspondence theory, which explained inequality in purely deterministic, economic terms. Such theories postulated a direct relationship between economic modes of production and schooling. In brief: cultural capital explanation directs attention to previously ignored cultural elements that influence

learning in school as well as in continuing education. Instead of giving more insights to this important theoretical approach, we will now turn to the empirical question, how we can describe shapes of habitus of different social groups.

3. Social milieus as reference groups in adult education: The Freiburg Study (1995-1998)

In the last decades, within Education and Social Science Departments, there has been a growing recognition that an analysis of social structures based on a class or stratification model has become an increasingly inadequate representation (Hradil, 1992, Barz and Tippelt, 1994, Lüders 1997). In the current debate on social structures these are seen as multi-dimensional and not depending entirely on occupational status (Müller, 1992, 1995: 17). Entering the debate in the last few years was the idea that socio-cultural structures, such as milieus and life-styles, partially chosen by individuals, should become part of what we understand by social structure (Vester et al, 1995, Ueltzhöffer and Flaig, 1993).

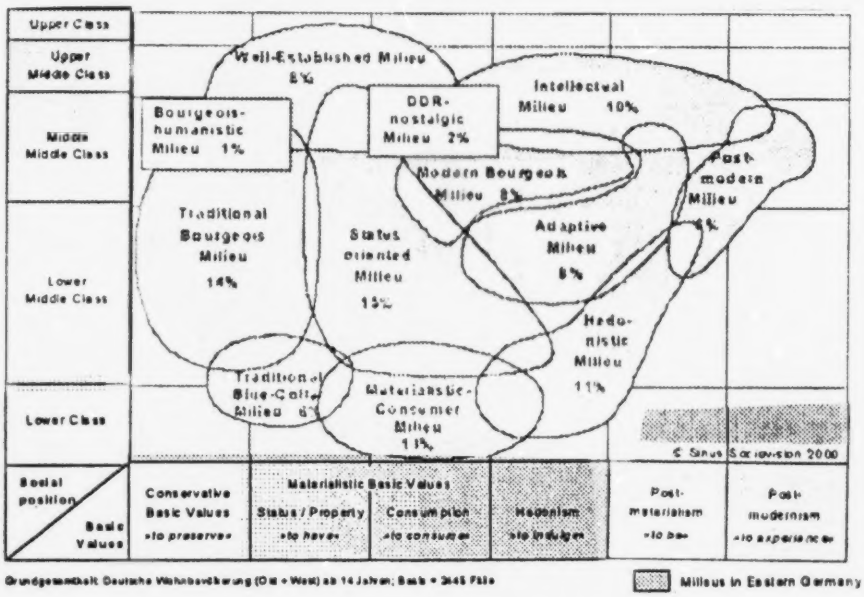
Sinus Sociovision has earned its reputation through the development of the leading concept of "Social Milieus", a social research approach based on the concept of "everyday life". This firstly assesses an individual's social world as a whole and then relates this to political behaviour, media consumption and product perception. Since then, the Sinus-Milieus have proven to be a highly efficient tool for gaining insight into peoples behaviour and have won acceptance amongst many leading companies, organisations and amongst the scientific community in Germany.

Despite the advantages in using the milieu model into research on adult education there have only been very few attempts to do so. One of this particular research looked at political education and adult education (Flaig et al, 1993). It empirically examined the milieu specific experiences, motives, expectations and interests to adult education in Germany. The findings of that project prompted this research study. Hopefully our further studies will offer a broader empirical foundation for this field.

One has to go back a long way, namely to the ‚Göttinger Studie' (1958) and Strzelewicz, Raapke and Schulenberg (1966) as well as the follow-on study by Schulenberg et al 1978, to look for a wide ranging study of the problem of ‚adult education and social inequality'. This pioneering work, still the standard study (Brödel 1995: 10), was based on a model of stratification. We, however, today prefer a milieu model. A strict replication was therefore not our intention. However, we took inspiration from this group of researchers, using some of the ideas and approaches, and even some of the formulations used by them.

The milieu specific framework we chose for the Freiburg Study ‚Social Milieu and Adult Education of Women' can be said to follow the established theory on social class by Max Weber (1972) which adheres to four classes; the working class, the petit bourgeois class, the intelligentsia without capital and specialists, as well as capitalists and the educated class. The milieu model, developed by Sinus Sociovision since 1979, in the last decade of the 20. century encompasses ten milieus in Western Germany and two in Eastern Germany. In the following pages four of them will be outlined briefly in the current version. To demonstrate the specific benefit of the milieu model we chose two milieus from the upper class and two milieus of the lower class: Within the traditional models of social structure it wasn't possible to take into consideration the in fact enormous intra-class differences concerning the value orientation. We add some key findings concerning the attitudes and interests in adult education (for the complete short descriptions see Appendix)

Illustration 1:
Sinus-Milieus 2000 - Germany



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Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West 2000

Well-Established Milieu

LEADING MILIEUS

Goals in Life

- Professional and material success through achievement, single-mindedness, readiness to lead and organize (ethics of success)
- Flexibility and ability to react in a quickly changing world
- Membership of the social elite, status mentality, power consciousness
- Distinguished way of life, financial independence, property ownership, high standard of living; intact family life
- Pragmatic-rational approach to life, doing what is feasible, positive attitude to technological progress

Social Status

- Predominantly first post-war generation (50 to 65 years of age)
- Above-average level of education
- Many senior employees and senior civil servants, self-employed, entrepreneurs and independent professionals
- High and top income brackets

Lifestyle

- Drawing a line between themselves and lower social classes, keeping among themselves in private life and leisure activities (new class consciousness)
- Intensive participation in social and cultural life, active commitment to associations and clubs
- Marked need for exclusivity, connoisseurship, sense of style
- Conscious identification with traditions, combination of nostalgic style preferences with elements of the modern

Adult Education

- Interests in culture (history of civilisation, literature)
- Against anonymity, against too much schooling
- VHS in the vocational field to achieve qualifications is good for others'. But a lot of older people attend intensive courses at the VHS (creativity, language, art, environment, politics)
- High expectations as to quality

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Intellectual Milieu

LEADING MILIEUS

Goals in Life

- Ecological and political correctness; social justice, consideration for the weak in society; cosmopolitan and tolerant
- Post-material goals: self-realization, further development of personality, individuality, personal freedom
- Performance and success in profession, but no classic achievement drive (work as a challenge); quest for meaning and fulfillment at work as well as in private life
- Model of emancipated family, rejection of traditional role models

Social Status

- Broad age spectrum up to the generation of the "young elderly"
- High to highest formal education: "Abitur" (A-level), university degree
- Qualified and senior employees and civil servants, independent professionals, large proportion of students
- Higher income brackets

Lifestyle

- Environment and health-conscious way of life (wellness), desire for balance and harmony between mind, body and soul
- Rejection of "superfluous" consumption
- Epicurean approach to enjoyment: connoisseurship and refinement, understatement and distinction
- Active participation in cultural life, extensive media use
- Thinking in global dimensions ("globalization of concerns"), acceptance of the "multi-cultural society"

Adult Education

- Broadly based interests: creativity, art, politics (not to be passive and become apathetic), condemnation of television
- Planning further education (one can make one's own luck), planning one's career
- Private providers, also VHS, not only recipients but providers
- One's own arranging and implementation of adult education

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Traditional Blue-Collar Milieu

TRADITIONAL MAINSTREAM

Goals in Life

- Satisfactory standard of living, to have a decent livelihood; no high aspirations
- Job security, provision for old age, safeguarding the family
- Social integration: be respected by colleagues, friends, neighbours (traditional working class culture)
- Modesty and adaptation to necessities, to base oneself on reality

Social Status

- Predominant age group: 60 years and older
- Mostly secondary school followed by vocational training
- Large proportion of skilled/semi-skilled/unskilled workers
- Above average proportion of pensioners receiving social security
- Low and middle income brackets

Lifestyle

- Pragmatic, sober view of own social status; simplicity, thrift
- Traditional role models, family as a community of solidarity
- No exaggerated consumption expectations, no prestige consumption; but pride in one's own labour
- Preference for sound, robust and durable products, distrust of fashionable innovations
- Increased worries to become marginalized in society (fading-away of the traditional welfare state, fears of globalization)

Adult Education

- Looks for involvement and security,
- Participation in trade unions
- Job security and responsibility in work
- Obstacles to learning from school-age, but education is appreciated as a human right

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Materialistic Consumer Milieu

(former "Uprooted Blue-Collar Milieu")

MODERN LOWER CLASS

Goals in Life

- Pronounced consumer materialism: to match the consumption standards of the broad middle class (TV, video recorder, mobile-phone, car, holidays)
- To have recognition, to keep up with the Joneses, »To belong« (to a normal middle class way of life); often feelings of being discriminated and disadvantaged
- Dreams of a »special way of life« (money, luxury, prestige), of »big chances« appearing out of nowhere

Social Status

- Accumulation of social disadvantages
- Low level of formal education, often inadequate job skills
- Above-average proportion of semi-skilled/unskilled workers, high unemployment rate
- Distinct over-representation of lower income brackets

Lifestyle

- Neglecting the future, concentration on here and now (not miss out on life, have "a piece of the cake" as well)
- Often improvident of the future: limited financial resources ("to live on credit"), often living beyond one's means .
- Spontaneous style of consumption, quick to take up the latest fashions and trends – to show that one can keep up; outward appearances play a major role

Adult Education

- Little integration into further education, fears of the barriers to overcome, ignorance
- Small financial budget, spa's and health education
- VHS is for others, but ‚education' is to be curious

4. The benefits of "lifelong learning" as reflected in ‚everyday life world' of different social milieus

The conviction that ‚lifelong learning' is indispensable has largely been accepted by all social groups. This is apparent in the overview of our findings about the importance of adult education now and in the future. The statements of our interviewees expressed about what represented the best education, and the characterisation they gave of an educated cultured person support this trend. In their comments people from all milieus stressed the necessity and the willingness to look at education as a lifelong process. It was repeatedly emphasised that existing knowledge and skills had constantly to be added to and expanded. We found particularly revealing the fact that the concept of lifelong learning had obviously become part of the every-day use in language. Many interviewees from all milieus used the term 'lifelong learning' quite spontaneously when explaining their individual understanding of education and further education, that is, without the interviewer having introduced it. An openness to new things, flexibility and the willingness to adapt were repeatedly cited as the qualities generally required in our modern industrial society. These were felt to be indispensable for advancement in one's work, even for meeting the changing requirements of the position one presently occupied. Technological change and developments in data-processing were cited as key areas where updating is needed. The second important factor in today's work environment which demands a constant willingness to engage in lifelong learning are the increasing number of jobs which require competence in languages and intercultural learning, as economic relationships, administration and tourism become progressively international. These changes in conjunction with the development of a world-wide net of transport, information and communication, result in the redundancy of some occupations and in the creation of new ones and the need to modify and to newly define some fields of work.

Across the milieus, the improvement and expansion of social competencies is seen as very important, particularly in relation to working life in the future. In fact it is noticeable that the economic perspective is predominant in regard to the necessity for further education. Most of our interviewees viewed education, because of the demands of the labour market, first and foremost as a means and not as an end in itself. A widespread willingness to change one's orientation and to learn new things does, however, also assist in the development of an individual's personality in order to negotiate successfully relationships in our private, family and social life and to cope in crisis situations.

As well as the dimension of the professional/vocational verses social/personal competence, a second dimension is, according to our findings significant: that is the way a person believes in the indispensability of further education. This is strongly influenced by the milieu to which they belong. The individual's attitude to further education can be said to be somewhere between the opposites of 'further education as a pleasurable pursuit' and a 'pressure to engage in further education'.

Members of the more modern milieus, the intellectual, the adaptive milieu, together with the well-established milieu, see themselves as the active creators of change, taking the initiative in respect of ambitions to engage in further education. It is obvious for members of the well-established milieu, that one 'keeps oneself up-to-date' both at home and by attending courses well into one's old age: 'because if one stagnates, one gets old'. Often examples of such "youthful oldies' are given from within the person's own family. In the adaptive milieu and, particularly in the intellectual milieu, equal importance is attached to the development of one's personality and the realisation of professional know-how": 'Learning is like rowing; if you stop then you go backwards', a secretary from the progressive no collar milieu told us.

In contrast the 'pressure to participate in further education' is most keenly felt by members of the traditional blue-collar milieu and even more in the materialistic consumer milieu: 'Well, one had to if one is not to be detached from social and economic development'. It is quite typical of those in the materialistic consumer milieu to have a somewhat detached attitude to further education. This is expressed in utterances like 'actually one should'. Further education also tends to be seen as a kind of undesirable pressure by members of the hedonistic milieu. Whilst members of this milieu do express that they have many interests, the intentions to pursue them rarely result in enrolment. The middle groups, the status-oriented milieu and the traditional bourgeois milieu, also take the middle ground in relation to the 'reactive verses active understanding of further education'. Lifelong learning is, at the present time, not only pleasurable and self-motivating, but also more of a duty. However, it is not purely motivated by a fear of going down in the world.

The traditional bourgeois milieu understand education mostly as a widening of one's horizon and also as acquiring knowledge about cultural traditions. Further education functions to increase knowledge about art and the history of civilisation. In the status-oriented milieu, vocational and pragmatically orientated interests predominate but further education is also regarded as a means to develop one's personality and to cope with conflicts.

5. The Munich Study (2000-2002): Initial results from the representative Munich survey

In order to deepen our knowledge concerning the attitudes towards continuing education of different social groups the Munich Study "Social and regional differentiation in continuing education in Germany" intends a regional survey. Especially we want to get information in the following major parts:

- The volume of continuing education in different social milieus
- Trends in participation in continuing education (such as frequencies, preferences in courses and providers etc.) in different social milieus
- Informal continuing vocational education in different social milieus
- Subjective qualifiers for participation (such as attitudes, rooms, didactics etc.) in different social milieus
- The barriers which prevent people from different social milieus to participate in continuing education

In addition to interviews with experts and group discussions this study includes a representative survey: In April 2001 we sent about 4000 questionnaires to a random sample section of the German speaking inhabitants of Munich. We received about 1.050 filled-in questionnaires which we can use for statistical purposes. The return rate of more than 25% questionnaires is a considerable success and shows that we obviously hit the language and mood of a great number of people. It also confirms that adult education is a broadly accepted topic and people are far away from being disgusted with it – on no account more than with other polls.

Unfortunately we have to concede that we still haven`t come to terms with the processing of our data. The main reason in order to this fact is the latest updating on the model of the social milieus[1], which has been happening during the summer months. Not until now this process can be considered as completed. Needless to say that we first have to await the milieudiagnostics of our sample to come across with a detailed and well-founded analysis.

For all that we'd like to give a short view of some key data of our sample, continuing with an initial interpretation of our data using the traditional social differentiation variables such as income, level of education und vocation.

The first reflections deal with the structure of our sample. As it is already mentioned the rate of responses was higher than ever expected: We received more than 1000

[1] This Update modifies the former model of social milieus in some aspects, which can't be described within this short paper. Besides the renaming and merging of a few milieus there is established the very new social segment of the new economy, the Modern Performers.

filled-in questionnaires which is equivalent to more than 25 % (rate of return). Although this could be estimated as a result of our research strategy we have to admit that we have severe disproportions in our sample. The first refers to the inequality regarding men and women. We count 43,7 % male in contrast to 56,2 % female respondents. Looking on the level of education you can find a rate of 47,0 % of "Abitur" (A-Level), which is more than twice as high as the average in Germany. If you add now the numbers of the so called "Fachabitur" (A-Level bound to a specific subject) we even count 59,1 %.

It stands to reason that this value is above the expected one, even though you assume comparatively higher percent numbers for Munich as a metropolis. The systematic distortion of the sample also finds expression in the affiliation of our respondents to the different social milieus: while the leading social milieus are obviously overrepresented, the traditional social segment as well as the modern Mainstream is evidently underrepresented (see Fig.1). This effect is markedly noticed in the Postmaterial milieu (the former Intellectual milieu) with 42,3 %. Its share of the german residential population otherwise amounts to 10%. Also the well-established milieu is with 18,6% compared to 10,0% in the average of the German Federal Republic remarkably overrepresented. Finally the new milieu of the modern Performer (prototype: Internet-Start-Up-Entrepreneur) appears with 15,6% in our sample far above the german average which is 8%. Looking at the causes of this Bias, at least four considerations should be taken into account:

Each inquiry has to cope with more or less strong distortions of its sample drawing in order to certain groups refusing research interests.

Proceeding on the assumption that especially less educated people sometimes feel ashamed about their lacks, particularly inquiries working with written questionnaires must be handled with caution.

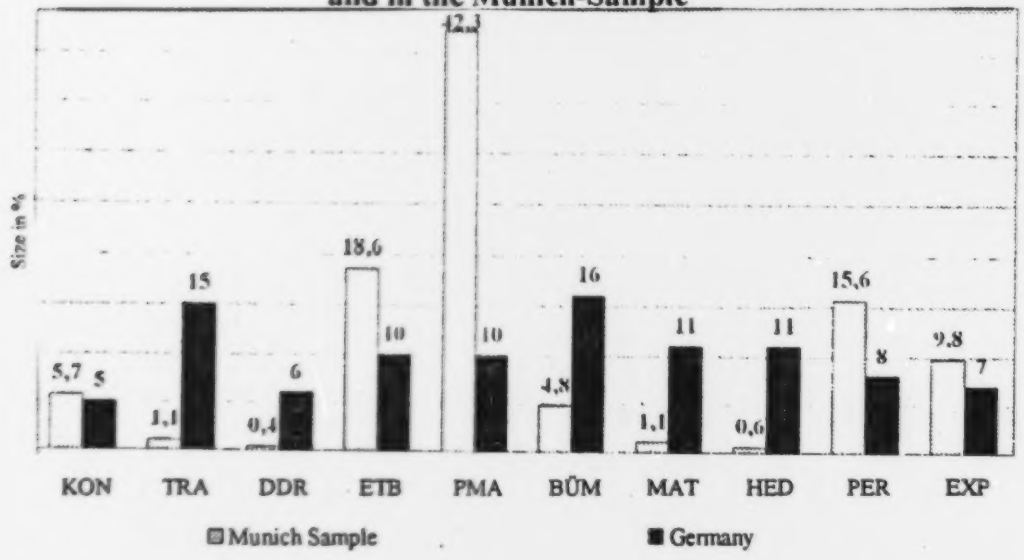
In addition to that, the title of our subject "further education experiences and further education interests" is suspected to decrease the readiness for cooperation of the less educated population.

Ultimately we have some external factors which have consolidated the described tendency to preselection: the institution which is carrying out the research work is the University of Munich, to which the filled-in questionnaires had to be sent back . And as an incentive we made a lottery, whose first price was a study trip to Rome (sponsored by Studiosus). Again two signals causing deterrence for people in lower social layers, which let them obviously remain reluctant or even more go on distance, feeling like: "this world of scholarship and learning isn't mine, I have no say in this matter."

Nevertheless our data show significant differences e.g. in the rates of participation in several subject areas. The overall preferences are shown in Fig. 2. One example for the milieuspecific interests concerning the participation in the very important field of PC-skills is given in Fig. 3. We can see, that the milieu of the Modern Performers reaches the highest rate (27,3%), the Conservative Milieu figures far below that (13,6%) and the Modern Mainstream is at the end with 8,2%.

After this very short view to the milieurelated analysis of our data I would like to present an interesting result in the framework of a classical sociodemografic dimension. Fig. 4 shows the most important reasons for paricipation in further education for the whole sample. It's obvious that jobrelated reasons are most important for those who participate in vocational seminaries. On the other hand personal interests without a perspective of application are the major reason for participation in general continuing education. But beside that not very exiting finding the item "it's funny" as a reason for participation seems to be of importance. Here again we find a big difference between the participants of vocational trainings and the participants of general continuing education. If we look on the differences in the rates of different income groups (see Fig. 5) we see a clear effect, that fun and entertainment expectations decline related with bigger incomes. And you can probably add: "Edutainment" and leisure elements are more necessary aspects for the lower social classes. That means: if we want these underprivileged groups to enjoy the wider benefits of learning, we have to take these aspects into consideration.

Fig. 1: Milieu quantities in Germany and in the Munich-Sample



Explication:

KON: Conservative Milieu

TRA: Traditionally rooted Milieu (former traditional workers and petty-bourgeois)

DDR: DDR-nostalgic Milieu

ETB: Well-established Milieu

PMA: Postmaterialist Milieu (former Intellectuals)

BÜM: Modern Mainstream ("bürgerliche Mitte" – former: modern bourgeois milieu)

MAT: Materialistic Consumers Milieu (former uprooted workers)

HED: Hedonists

PER: Modern Performers

EXP: Experimentalists (former: Postmodern Milieu)

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Fig. 2: Preferences of subject areas in Further Education in Munich 2001

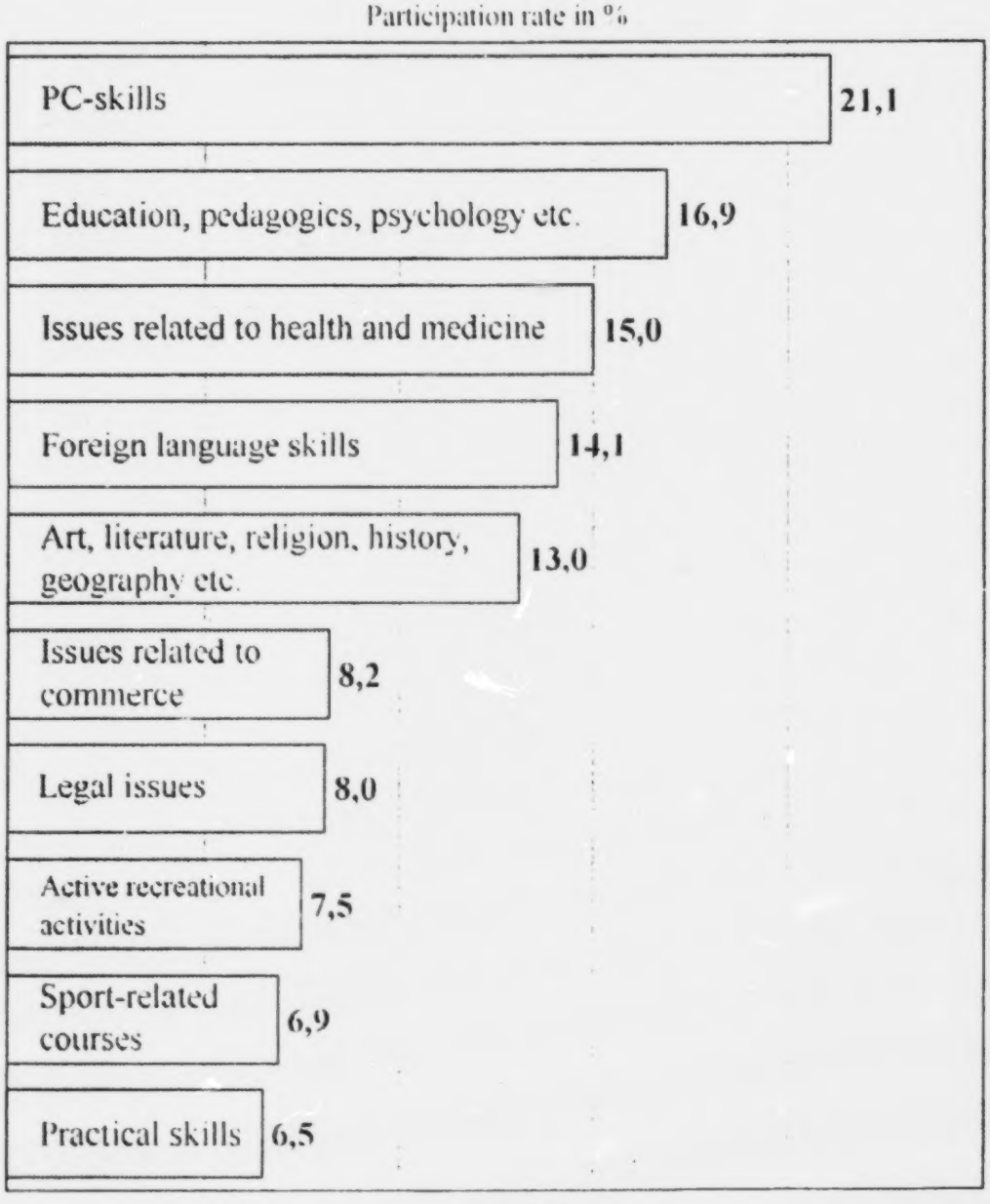

Fig. 3: Further Education in the field of PC-skills selected milieus of the Munich-Sample 2001

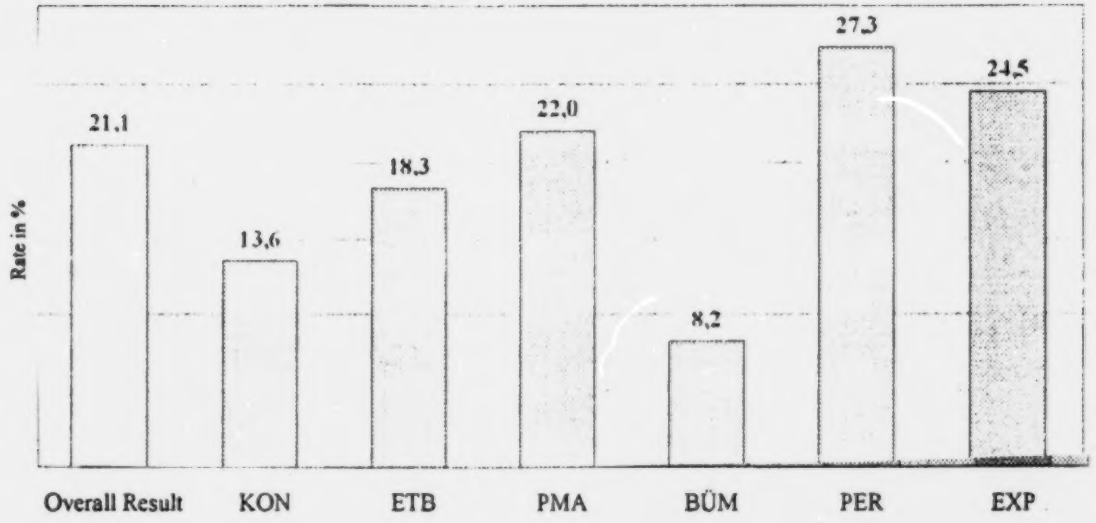

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Fig. 4: Most important reason for participation in further education, Munich 2001

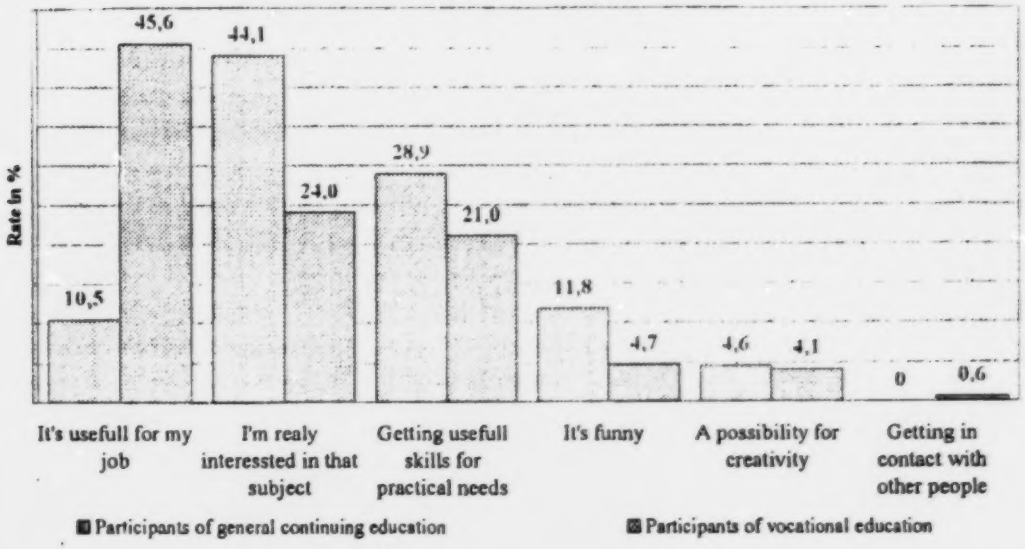

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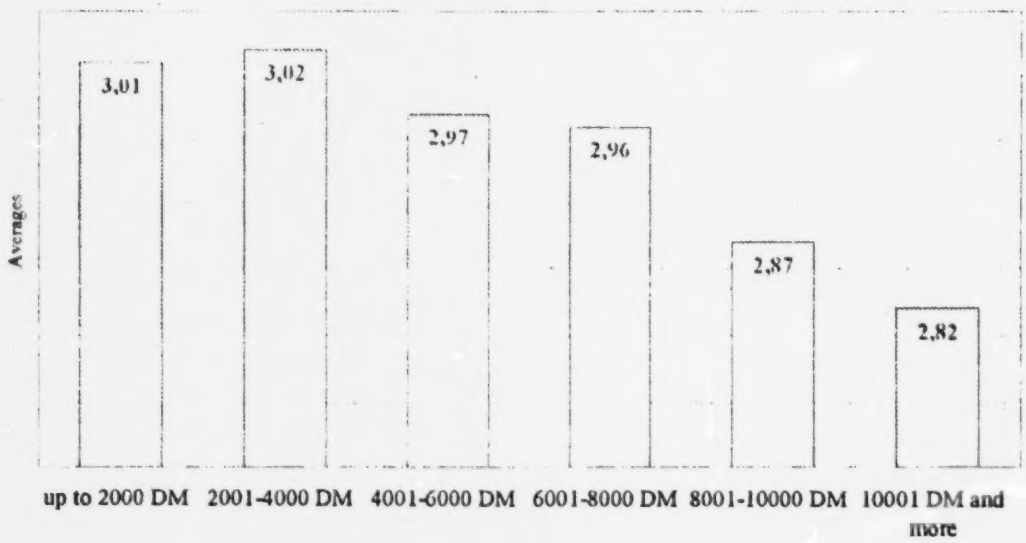
Fig. 5: Only a funny course is a good course



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Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Traditional Bourgeois Milieu

(the former "Petit-Bourgeois Milieu")

TRADITIONAL MAINSTREAM

Goals in Life

- Preservation of traditional values: carrying out one's duties, decency, reliability, order and discipline
- Creation of lasting values: property (e.g. home ownership), material security, maintaining the standard of living
- Preference for status quo: protection of that already attained, an ordered life

Social Status

- Predominant age group is the war generation (65 years and older); accordingly large proportion of women
- Predominantly secondary school followed by vocational training
- Many junior and middle-ranking employees and civil servants, as well as small self-employed and farmers
- Large proportion of pensioners
- Mostly low to middle income brackets

Lifestyle

- Conventionalism, conformity, security
- Readiness to live modestly, to do without, classical thrift mentality
- Preference for classic, solid products of good (medium) quality, durable and easy to clean
- Neatness and cleanliness most important life-style elements
- Cocooning (wall of curtains, hedgerows, fences)

Adult Education

- Trust in the established providers, eager for culture
- Personal bond with Church providers, but also important target group of the VHS
- Deep desire for harmony, to find one's identity
- Adult education in order to achieve social and vocational integration
- Further vocational trade training; to establish oneself

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Post-Modern Milieu

LEADING MILIEUS

Goals in Life

- Unimpeded development of own personality, seeking diverse experiences, discover individual abilities and preferences; full expression of feelings, talents and yearnings
- Rejection of external constraints, norms, ideologies and role models, refusal to commit or establish themselves; unconventional careers, patchwork biographies
- Live life enthusiastically: drive the body, mind and senses to existential limits

Social Status

- Young milieu, predominantly under 40 years of age; many singles
- Higher education
- (Middle-ranking) employees, freelancers and independent professionals; many school pupils, college students and young academics
- Income distribution almost the same as sample universe

Lifestyle

- Self-centered life strategy: have, live and indulge – if possible without restrictive obligations
- Inconsistency as a way of life, "multi-optional individual": experimenting with different lifestyles, living in different milieus, worlds and cultures
- Strong desire for communication and entertainment/movement (being away, going clubbing, seeing events, sports)
- Preference for experimental aesthetic stagings and stylistic breaches; self-confidence as lifestyle avant-garde, in search of the exceptional, original and authentic

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Adaptive Milieu

(the former "progressive no collar milieu")

MODERN MAINSTREAM

Goals in Life

- To live as pleasant a life as possible, to be able to afford whatever one likes – but flexible expectations (pragmatic hedonism)
- To have own ideas and plans, assume responsibility, act independently (desire for autonomy)
- Outcome-oriented, acceptance of the achievement principle
- To develop spiritually and intellectually, not stagnate (life-long learning process)
- Have business and material success whenever and wherever prospects open up ("adaptive navigation")

Social Status

- Young milieu, large proportion of under-forties, often children in household
- Two thirds have finished at least "Realschule"(O-level); many trainees, school pupils and college students
- Qualified employees in modern sectors: skilled workers (often in pacemaker-industries), public sector employees
- Middle to higher income brackets, often double income

Lifestyle

- Socially mobile; open-minded towards anything new, no fixed views on life, tolerant versus different styles – but also often lack of style
- Mainstream of young leisure culture, display conventional modernism as consumers; taking part in what is fun
- High Tech and multimedia seen as natural everyday elements (at work and in private); largest proportion of internet users
- Knowledgeable consumers with distinct quality orientation (smart shoppers), but also convenience orientation (being served) and spontaneous purchase decisions ("take along" – don't wait)

Adult Education

- ‚Learning is like rowing; if one stops one goes backwards'
- Lifelong learning (computer courses, rhetoric, compensation for deficiencies)
- Vocational courses at the VHS (i.e. languages in one's job) but also private providers

MODERN MAINSTREAM

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Status-Oriented Milieu

(the former "social climbers milieu")

Goals in Life

- Distinct status orientation ("mixing with the right people"), professional and social success through performance
- To have demonstrable success, to achieve more than the average, to have the recognition of others
- Great importance of material values (car, holidays, exclusive leisure activities)
- Money plays an important role, not only for lifestyle, but also to safeguard oneself (possibly establishing wealth)
- Often afraid of decline in social status: keeping up the status-quo, the higher standard of living, as the main objective in life

Social Status

- Frequently secondary school followed by vocational training
- Many skilled workers and qualified employees, as well as (smaller) self-employed and independent professionals
- Higher income brackets

Lifestyle

- Orientation to the standards of higher classes, aspiring to luxury
- Consumers of prestigious goods, great importance attached to status symbols; representative aesthetics (seeking to impress)
- Exclusive leisure activities, hobbies, and travels, serving mostly for the purpose of social positioning
- Fulfillment of role expectations in professional and social life (avoid attracting negative attention)

Adult Education

- No particular aspiration, culturally and intellectually. Ambivalence to higher education
- Further vocational training in order to achieve vocational and social advancement, visible success
- Conscious of the prestige and status of the providers. Reservations: ‚some of the courses on offer are not up to standard'
- Interested in VHS – (Qualification orientated, health education and creativity)

Description of Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Modern Bourgeois Milieu

MODERN MAINSTREAM

Goals in Life

- Harmonious, pleasant, sheltered life (modern "Biedermeier"), longing for an idyllic private life
- All-embracing desire for security– material, social, emotional; reasonable living standard (belonging to the middle class)
- Family and happy children are often the central meaning of life
- Individual self-realization – while fundamentally willing to adapt and integrate: be considerate with other people and the environment

Social Status

- Frequently larger households, child-friendly milieu; predominant age group 30 to 60 years
- Qualified medium education level
- Mostly junior/middle-ranking employees and civil servants
- Middle income brackets

Lifestyle

- Desire for quality of life, comfort and enjoyment; distinct convenience orientation
- Community-orientated private life (family, relatives, friends), "extended virtual family"
- Great importance attached to social values (friendliness, tolerance, fairness), balance and harmony with neighbours and environment; ecologically correct behavior, "Eco-morality"
- Preference for conventional, modern aesthetics: friendly, solid, merry stagings – without stylistic extravaganza

Description of the Sinus-Milieus in Germany-West (2000)

Hedonistic Milieu

MODERN LOWER CLASS

Goals in Life

- Freedom, independence, spontaneity (demonstrative rejection of conventions, principles)
- Enjoying life, living life to the full, desire for communication, fun and action, being »on the road«; escaping the constraints of everyday life
- Being different from the "bourgeois"; sub-cultural identity – either self-confident or with the feeling of a loser

Social Status

- Predominant age group: up to 40 years
- Above-average incidence of lower formal education ("dropouts")
- Many school pupils and trainees, large proportion of unemployed, unskilled and semi-skilled workers, lowest ranking employees ("temps")
- Mostly low to middle income brackets

Lifestyle

- Living for the moment, virtually no plans for the future: hanging around, looking for whatever comes up
- Spontaneous consumption habits, no control over money; high consumption affinity for consumer electronics, clothes, music, multimedia
- Like the good life, luxury, comfort and convenience
- Increased experiences with restrictions, limitations and competitive pressure (less and less chances of "making easy money")
- Demonstrative non-conformism, style protest ("strong sensations"), deliberately provoking the established society

Adult Education

- Disassociation from political education and a rejection of established providers
- Boring, dogmatic; rejection of lifelong learning
- Adult education seen as a social and youth orientated cultural event